

WASHINGTON, DC - House Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer (MD) released the following statement today in response to President Bush's Social Security pitch at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring:

"Last week, I hosted an Online Town Hall meeting with constituents in Maryland to discuss the President's proposal to privatize Social Security and cut middle-class benefits.

"Once again, my constituents expressed overwhelming opposition to the Republican privatization scheme, as they have throughout this debate. Like the majority of residents of every other state the President has visited, Marylanders want to save Social Security and don't want to turn a guaranteed benefit into a gamble.

"The American people are clear in their opposition to Social Security privatization, whether it is the President's proposal or the proposal introduced yesterday in the House. This most recent privatization scheme would use the Social Security surpluses to establish private accounts, blow a hole in our nation's budget, and doesn't even pretend to address solvency. It would do nothing more than advance the Republicans' ideological goal to privatize Social Security against the wishes of the American people.

"Republicans should stop ignoring the American people, end their privatization campaign and join Democrats in crafting a bipartisan agreement that would shore up Social Security for future generations. Democrats are absolutely committed to addressing Social Security's shortfall, but we will stand up against privatization schemes that seek to unravel the program's promise to America's seniors."

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